

School Committee Meeting Minutes
Shirley Middle School
May 25, 2004

Present: Donald Parker, Chairperson
Gary Bourassa
Hugh Muffoletto
Paul Wilson
Bob Prescott

Also Present: Dr. Thomas Scott, Superintendent
Patricia Stern, Business Manager
Sylvia Jordan, Middle School Principal
Suzanne Mahoney, Elementary Principal
Lonnie Ouellette, Early Learning Director
Thomas Walsh, SPED Director
Mike Smith, FinCom
Joe Deguglielmo, DEAC

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

School Committee Reorganization:

With the election of new committee terms, the committee voted from its membership a new chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary. Mr. Mufolletto motioned for Mr. Bourassa to be elected Chairperson. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson motioned for Mr. Muffoletto to be elected Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Prescott seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson motioned for Mr. Prescott to be elected Secretary. Mr. Muffoletto seconded the motion. All motions were approved.

Public Participation:

Jane Cook, STO, expressed her thanks to the school committee for their hard work in preparing the budget.

Old Business:

Mr. Mufolletto motioned to approve the minutes for the April 6 and April 12, 2004 school committee meetings. Mr. Parker seconded the motion to accept both. Motion was approved.

The committee moved forward to discuss the ATM Warrant. Mrs. Stern explained that the Selectmen voted to give the school district \$70,000 in revenue from the McNiff gravel operation. This money will be broken down to cover costs in preschool-grade 8 and high school tuition costs (\$56,109) as well as preschool-grade 12 transportation costs

(\$13,891). Despite the inclusion of this revenue, the school district still faces a deficit of \$422,425. Dr. Scott stated that the committee should decide how it would like the override to appear on the warrant. Dr. Scott recommended that two questions be placed on the warrant: 1) \$95,624 to cover preschool-grade 8 and high school tuition costs and 2) \$327,425 for SPED tuition and transportation costs. Mr. Muffoletto would like to see that the SPED costs be broken down (\$119,650 for transportation & \$207,151 for tuition), thereby creating three questions for the warrant. He would like contingencies placed on revenue received from Chapter 70, Circuit Breaker and grants that any money received over the anticipated amount be given back to the town to pay down the override debt.

Mike Smith stated that the Finance Committee supports the override and explained that the Finance Committee recommends placing two questions on the warrant. However, he noted that by listing the SPED costs as one total the committee could not break down the figure to indicate what the costs specifically represent. Mr. Smith did state that should the override fail, the general consensus within the Finance Committee is that the SPED costs are a town responsibility and would recommend that the Selectmen determine how they can fund the shortfall from the entire town budget.

Mr. Prescott motioned to place three line items on the warrant, allowing the SPED items to be listed individually. Mr. Parker seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Dr. Scott discussed the school accreditation process. He recommends that the accreditation process be delayed until September 2005. He cited lack of funding and time. Also, Professional Development is already planned for improving the math and literacy programs. Mr. Muffoletto stated that he believe the accreditation process should continue, as did Mr. Parker. It was recommended that Dr. Scott come back to the next meeting with the costs associated with this process. Dr. Scott agreed.

Mrs. Stern reviewed Payroll Warrants 345 and 845. She also reviewed Payables Warrant 449.

The committee reviewed the 2004-2005 school calendar. Committee members were concerned about the multiple days off during September and October. Mr. Bourassa would like school to start after Labor Day to accommodate family vacations. Dr. Scott explained that these days were scheduled for professional development courses with math and literacy consultants. The committee asked that Dr. Scott look into rescheduling the consultant's visits. The committee would like Mr. Muffoletto motioned to delay the approval of the calendar until the next meeting. Mr. Bourassa seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson voted "no" to delaying the vote. The motion was approved.

Dr. Scott presented a letter to be signed by the school committee chairperson indicating exemption from maintaining a high school. Mr. Wilson motioned to accept the letter. Mr. Muffoletto seconded the letter. The motion was approved.

Correspondence:

Mr. Walsh presented his letter of resignation to the school committee. In looking for his replacement, Dr. Scott would like to hire someone with the title of Director of Instruction. This person would have responsibility for instruction in both regular and special education. Mr. Parker motioned to delay the approval of this position until the next meeting. He would also like to see what salary range this new position would require. Mr. Muffoletto seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

A letter from a middle school parent was presented to the committee. This letter praised the MCAS test and the opportunities that this test could provide to successful students.

Mrs. Jordan reviewed a letter that was sent to her staff regarding report card grading. She mentioned that she wanted to open up discussions as to how to proceed with a new aspect of our software system. The committee was concerned about how the internal school memo could have been circulated around town. Both Mrs. Jordan and Dr. Scott stated that if anyone has questions about anything they see or hear to contact them directly. Committee members asked Dr. Scott to contact Mr. Keady and find out how he came in contact with the memo.

Public Participation:

Sebastian Carbone requested a meeting with the school committee. Dr. Scott suggested that the committee go into executive session to discuss personnel issues. A motion was made to go into executive session.

Roll Call:

Don Parker – Yes
Paul Wilson – Yes
Bob Prescott – Yes
Gary Bourassa – Yes
Hugh Muffoletto – Yes

After a five minute break the committee went into executive session at 8:50 p.m.

After executive session, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Karen Gutheil